

REPTILE MITIGATION STRATEGY

Sarum Academy

for

Morgan Sindall

June 2026

THE **Landmark**
PRACTICE

Unit 1 Theynes Court
Long Ashton Business Park
Yanley Lane
Bristol BS41 9LB
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)117 923 0455

enquiries@thelandmarkpractice.com
www.thelandmarkpractice.com

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**D denotes a Draft version*

The information which we have prepared and provided is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

Tel: 0117 923 0455

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Reptile Mitigation Strategy (RMS) has been prepared on behalf of Morgan Sindall for grassland field 10FE (Form Entry) at Sarum Academy, Westwood Rd, Salisbury SP2 9HS, hereafter referred to as the 'Site.'
- 1.2 Hybrid planning application for the expansion of Sarum Academy has been submitted to Wiltshire Council (WC) in January 2026 (PL/2026/00589). A full planning permission is sought for erection of a new detached classroom block to the northwest of the main school building; a weather protected link to the existing main building; a new artificial turf pitch with flood lights; and associated works required to expand the school from a 6FE to an 8FE school. Outline planning permission (for access, scale and layout, with all other matters reserved) for erection of a new detached classroom block on the existing car park; additional and replaced car parking areas; a new sports pitch; and associated works required to further expand the school from an 8FE to a 10FE school.
- 1.3 During the application process, the Wiltshire Council (WC) Ecologist requested a detailed Reptile Mitigation Strategy, informed by the further ecological surveys, is produced for the Site:

"A comprehensive Reptile Mitigation Strategy is required to accompany the application. The proposed development will result in a reduction in available habitat and overall carrying capacity, and it cannot be assumed that displacement into the wider landscape is feasible given the constraints posed by the adjacent site, which already supports significant reptile populations.

Accordingly, further ecological information is required at this stage to adequately assess impacts and to ensure that reptiles are appropriately safeguarded in accordance with relevant legislation and planning policy."

- 1.4 This RMS has therefore been prepared to satisfy this request and ensure that legally protected species will not be adversely affected by site clearance activities. A Construction Environment Management Plan for Biodiversity (CEMP-B) has also been produced and should be referred to (TLP, 2026).

Site Location and Description

- 1.5 The Site is located in the north-eastern edge of Salisbury (approximate central grid reference SU 11604 31859, **Figure 1**).
- 1.6 The Site is approximately 7 ha in size and broadly comprises a school, including buildings and associated infrastructure such as access roads, parking, sport pitches and green spaces. Grassland with scattered young trees and scrub bounds the Site to the north, a construction site comprising new residential development to the east, whilst arable fields bound the Site to the west. In the wider landscape, extensive new residential development is located to the north and former Quidhampton Quarry, currently partially used as a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is located to the south of the Site.
- 1.7 The local planning authority (LPA) is Wiltshire Council.

Reptiles/Amphibians

- 1.8 The 10FE grassland field offers foraging, commuting and hibernating opportunities for common species of reptile in the form of scrub and tussocky grassland. Reptiles are

present within the 10FE grassland field, as common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) was noted during the Precautionary Methods of Works (PMW) when the grassland was mown to facilitate surveys.

- 1.9 Reptile surveys for the adjacent planning application identified a significant population of common lizards and slow worms (*Anguis fragilis*) (PL/2023/05287). Translocation work commenced in 2022 and proceeded in 2023 and 2024. During this time 324 adult slow worms, 236 juvenile slow worms, 598 adult common lizard and 948 juvenile common lizards were translocated.
- 1.10 A translocation was also undertaken in 2025 but was paused in May, as the 20-adult reptile cap, set by WC under the Reserved Matters permission for development parcel, was reached. During the 2025 translocation, the numbers of slow worm was extremely low, with only two individuals recorded. Common lizards were recorded more frequently, although only four individuals were translocated over the 10 days period before cessation of activities.
- 1.11 A further reptile translocation scheme is currently being implemented to address the high population numbers recorded over the years (300 reptiles per hectare). However, reptile fencing has been in place since 2022 separating the reptile population associated with the above application from the Site. It is therefore likely that the reptiles on Site are a separate population which is most likely significantly smaller, due to the extent of suitable habitat and low numbers encountered during the PMW.
- 1.12 It is also likely that reptiles on Site are restricted to 10FE field given the rest of the Site is dominated by buildings, hardstanding and heavily managed vegetation.
- 1.13 Some of grassland within 10FE will be converted into a grass sports pitch (c. 0.742 ha) and lost to create a carpark (c. 0.01 ha). Majority of grassland (0.936 ha) will be retained and enhanced to rough, species rich, tussocky grassland which will be managed long term for reptiles. In addition, 0.316 ha scrub will be retained and enhanced and 0.03 ha will be created. Suitable habitat for reptiles is present to the south and west of the Site and no barriers for dispersal will be created between Site and suitable habitats in the wider landscape.
- 1.14 Presence/absence surveys within 10FE will be undertaken prior to commencement of works to inform mitigation measures which will be adapted if required.

2.0 LEGISLATION

- 2.1 All British reptile species are afforded some protection under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Partially protected under Schedule 5 of the Act and under part of Section 9(1) and all of Section 9(5). As such it is an offence to:
- Intentionally kill or injure an individual of these species; and
 - Transport for sale or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange alive or dead individual or any part of an individual of these species.
- 2.2 Under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, all British reptile species, are listed as species of principal importance (SPI) for the purpose of conserving biodiversity.
- 2.3 Any works that could harm species of reptile must be carried out in a manner that ensures their protection i.e. by following the measures detailed in this RMS.

3.0 REPTILE PRESENCE/ABSENCE SURVEYS

- 3.1 Prior to commencement of any works reptile presence/absence surveys will be conducted in order to inform the Reptile Mitigation Strategy.
- 3.2 Reptile surveys will follow best practice guidelines (Gent and Gibson, 2003) and will involve deployment of 120 artificial reptile refugia, comprising a mixture of bitumen felt mats and corrugated sheeting. Reptile refugia will be distributed in suitable habitat across the Site and will be left for a minimum period of two weeks to bed down, to allow time for reptiles to locate them. The refugia will then be subsequently checked on seven occasions, along with any natural features or refuges within the Site, in suitable weather conditions (i.e. dry, still conditions with air temperatures between 10 and 20°C).

4.0 REPTILE MITIGATION STRATEGY

Potential Impacts

- 4.1 In the absence of mitigation, the clearance of the Site would likely result in the killing and injury of reptiles, due to the extent of habitat that requires removal. Furthermore, it is also possible that reptiles or other wildlife could be killed or injured during the construction period, following vegetation clearance, should they enter the work area or bask/shelter amongst materials or debris. These effects therefore need to be avoided, through the mitigation measures outlined below.

Receptor Areas – Management and Enhancements

Site Selection

- 4.2 It is currently anticipated that the retained and enhanced habitats within the 10FE area will be suitable for any reptiles displaced as a result of the proposals.
- 4.3 These habitats will comprise infrequently managed, tussocky grassland and scrub, and is not subject to any development pressure. Proposals for future management will be in accordance with requirements for common lizard and slow worm and therefore the site will offer suitable habitat long term.

Carrying Capacity

- 4.4 Following completion of the reptile surveys on Site, a reptile population assessment survey might need to be undertaken, to inform suitability of this area of the Site and the requirement for enhancements to habitat present to increase carrying capacity.
- 4.5 Management of these areas are detailed within the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) which has the objective of improving the habitat for reptiles as well as the overall condition of the habitats in BNG terms. However as part of this Strategy a walkover survey should be undertaken and any additional measures implemented prior to the translocation exercise to immediately improve the site for reptiles. This will be informed by on the ground observations but is likely to include measures such as creating a diverse sward height in areas to maximise basking opportunities, reducing scrub cover and creating scalloped edges to scrub to increase shelter and length of scrub edges. These works will be detailed in a summary report following completion of the translocation.
- 4.6 A reptile hibernaculum will be constructed within each receptor site to further enhance the habitat for reptiles. These should be constructed in well-drained areas. A design is provided in **Appendix C**, it will comprise a pile of logs and stones/rubble, capped with

topsoil, with margins left open to allow access. If soil is free draining, the hibernaculum can be partially dug in.

- 4.7 These enhancement measures should take place outside the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive) to avoid potential impacts on nesting birds or follow checks by a suitably experienced ecologist.

Site Translocation (if required)

- 4.8 Should the translocation be scheduled more than 2 years after the original reptile survey date (to be undertaken prior to commencement of works on Site), update surveys must be undertaken to establish current population levels and reptile distribution around the site **prior** to the translocation.
- 4.9 If translocation of reptiles from the Site is required, it will take place during the reptile active season (typically mid-March until mid-October but subject to seasonal variable weather). The translocation should be undertaken by suitably experienced ecologists - with reptile handling experience and knowledge of reptile ecology.
- 4.10 The translocation exercise will require installation of reptile exclusion fencing around the areas suitable for reptiles prior to the construction phase. The location and extent of reptile fencing will be informed by the reptile surveys. Fencing will be installed during the reptile active season, once temperatures are sufficiently high to ensure reptiles are above ground and active. Fencing will be maintained throughout the construction period to ensure reptiles cannot enter the Site from surrounding habitat.
- 4.11 Reptile refugia (typically 0.5 m by 0.5 m bitumen felt and corrugated tin sheeting) will be set out in high density in all potentially suitable habitats. These will be left to bed in for at least seven days and will be checked daily during periods of suitable weather conditions. Any reptiles encountered will be captured and moved to the receptor site at appropriate densities informed by the population assessments undertaken.
- 4.12 All reptiles found will be captured by hand and transported in suitable containers (with leaf/grass for cover and air vents within) to the receptor area, taking care to ensure they are not subject to undue stress or heat. Reptiles would be released into suitable habitats within the receptor area close to cover.
- 4.13 All reptiles will be released as soon as possible following capture, unless environmental conditions require the animals to be held temporarily until weather conditions become more suitable. Capture records, including information on sex, age, location of capture, weather conditions and location of release, will be noted where possible. All field workers undertaking the translocation should be suitably experienced ecologists with a sound knowledge of reptile ecology and experience in handling reptiles. The translocation exercise would continue for a period of up to 30 trapping days, or until five clear trapping days or sustained low capture rates are achieved (subject to agreement with WC Ecologist).

Site Habitat Manipulation

- 4.14 When and if capture rates begin to decline noticeably, vegetation management on-site can be undertaken under supervision of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECOW) in order to maximise the chances of reptiles using the refugia on-site by reducing the number of alternative areas for shelter.

-
- 4.15 This should be completed as a two phased cut, one down to c.150mm, with a second cut to ground level following at least 24hrs later, with arisings removed.

Contingency for Continued High Numbers of Reptiles

- 4.16 The receptor area should be large enough in extent to account for an eventuality that higher numbers of reptiles are recorded. The translocation exercise should continue beyond 30 days if required, until five clear trapping days or sustained low numbers are recorded (subject to agreement with WC Ecologist).
- 4.17 Should more than 20 individuals be translocated on more than one translocation visit, or cumulative total numbers reach more than 80, then a second hibernaculum must be provided at the receptor site, within 3 months of the translocation period concluding, installed by the applicant (subject to agreement with WC Ecologist). As above, any additional hibernaculum should be subject to an annual maintenance visit by the applicant for a period of at least 10 years.

Destructive Search

- 4.18 An ecological watching brief will be undertaken by the ECoW at the Site during all habitat clearance works with potential to impact on reptiles.
- 4.19 On completion of the translocation exercise, all remaining habitats should be cleared using the two phased cut prescribed in **paragraph 4.15**. Remaining debris and potential reptile refugia, such as piles of rubble, logs, discarded man-made materials, will be checked by hand by the ECoW before being removed from Site. All reptiles found during this clearance will be released into the receptor site on the same day following the methodology above.
- 4.20 With regard to tree root protection areas as specified within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Arbor-Call 2025), where habitat is not retained, and starting with vegetated areas, existing topsoil will then be destructively searched, under supervision, being stripped by an excavator with a toothed bucket to an average depth of 300mm, the topsoil turned and stockpiled on site as required.

Timetable of Works

- 4.21 A Gantt chart is provided at **Appendix B** illustrating the timetable of the above works.

Other Measures Including Maintenance of Site

- 4.22 Photographs to aid identification of protected species will be provided to the Site Manager and made available to all staff throughout the site clearance and construction phase (**Appendix D**). Site operatives will be vigilant to the presence of common lizards and slow worms or other wildlife in their working areas and encouraged to report any new evidence noted in their works area to the Site Manager.
- 4.23 Upon completion of the destructive search, the Site will be released to the contractor. The Construction Zone should be maintained as unsuitable for reptiles throughout the construction phase, with vegetation prevented from re-establishing where cleared. The construction zone will require weekly checks by the construction site manager to ensure this is maintained.
- 4.24 Any building materials such as bricks, stone etc. will be stored on pallets or above ground to discourage reptiles from using them as shelter. Any demolition materials will be stored

in skips or similar containers rather than in piles on the ground. These should be at least 10 m from boundary vegetation.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The proposed RMS is designed to prevent the risk of killing or injury during construction. The overall objective is to safeguard the population in the long term by relocating it to a location which is better connected to the wider countryside and can be managed long term for the benefit of reptiles and other wildlife.

REFERENCES

Arbor-Call (2025) Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Sarum Academy, Westwood Road, Salisbury.

ECOSA (2025). Reptile Mitigation Strategy, Parcel B3. Fugglestone Red, Salisbury. Wiltshire. Final Document.

ECOSA (2025). Reptile Mitigation Strategy, Parcel B3. Fugglestone Red, Salisbury. Wiltshire. Final Document Rev.2

English Nature (2004). Reptiles: Guidelines for Developers. English Nature, Peterborough.

Froglife (1999). Reptile survey: An introduction to planning, conducting and interpreting surveys for snake and lizard conservation. Froglife Advice Sheet 10. Froglife, Halesworth.

Gent, A.H., & Gibson, S.D. (1998) Herpetofauna workers' manual. Peterborough. Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Natural England (2011) Reptile Mitigation Guidelines, TIN102.

TLP (2025) Construction Environmental Management Plan for Biodiversity (CEMP-B).

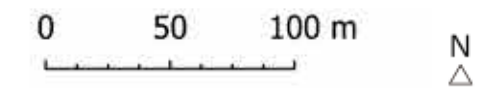
TLP (2026) Sarum Academy Ecological Impact Assessment.

TLP (2026) Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan



Legend:

-  Site location
-  Site boundary



Scale 1 : 2,500 @ A3

SARUM ACADEMY CEMP

FIGURE 1
Site Location

THE Landmark
PRACTICE

1 - 2 Theynes Court, Long Ashton Business Park, Yanley Lane, Bristol BS41 9LB
T: +44 (0)117 923 0455 E: enquiries@thelandmarkpractice.com
www.thelandmarkpractice.com

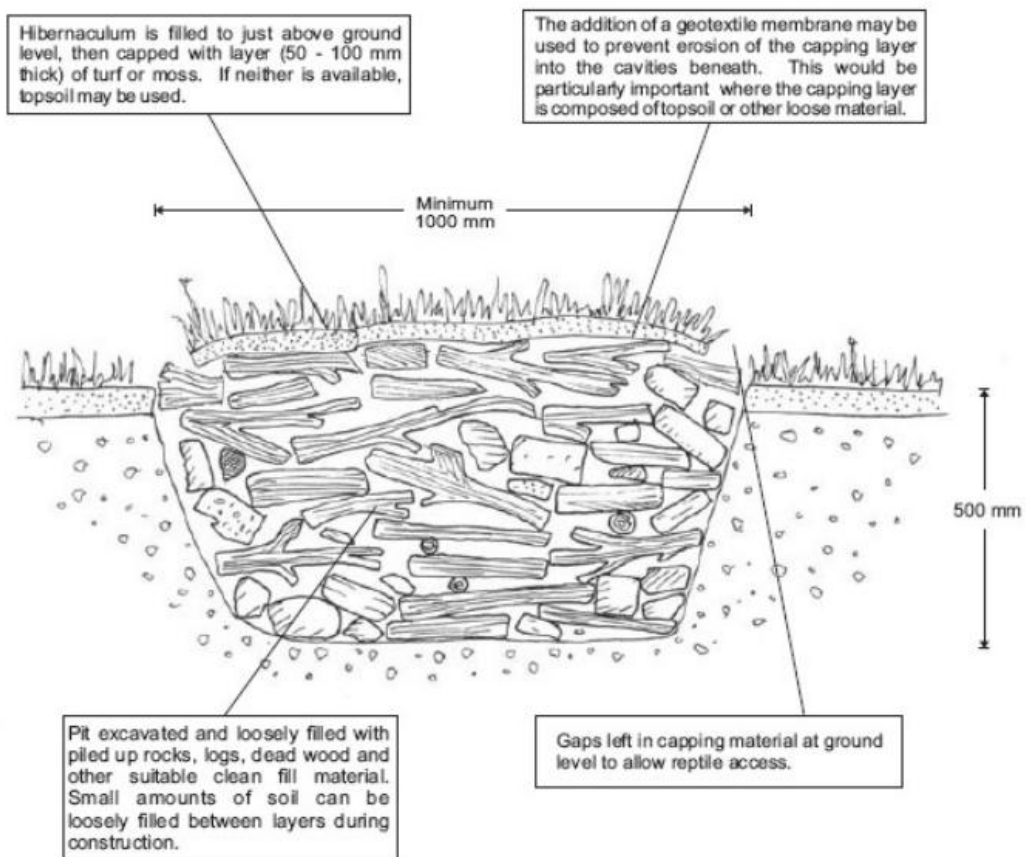
Drwn: GM Chkd: SR Auth: SR Date: 17 Dec 25

APPENDIX A: TRANSLOCATION TIMETABLE OF WORKS

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Deployment of reptile refugia on donor site			At least 7 days prior to commencement of translocation									
Translocation					Up to 30 days (beyond if captures continue), or until 5 clear trapping days							
Habitat Manipulation						As capture rates decline - two phased cut as specified						
Destructive Search							On completion of translocation exercise					
Maintenance of site as unsuitable for reptiles							Following completion of destructive search until completion of construction					

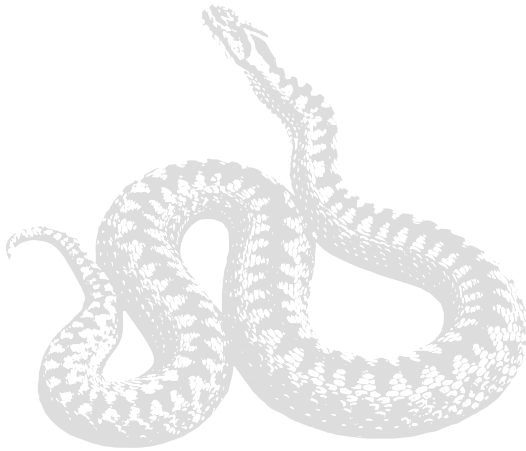
APPENDIX B: REPTILE HIBERNACULUM DESIGN

Plate 1 – General design of reptile hibernacula



**Source: Highways Agency (2005) *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges: Volume 10*
Section 4 Part 7 – Nature Conservation Advice in Relation to Roads and Reptiles**

APPENDIX C: REPTILE ID SHEET



What to do on site

Be especially careful when moving logs and piles of rubble, stone and ballast as these are places where reptiles may be sheltering. If reptiles are encountered on the site then work should stop immediately. A member of The Landmark Practice Ecology Team should be contacted on **0117 923 0455**.

Identification

- Common UK reptile species potentially encountered on development sites include slow worm, grass snake, adder and common lizard.
- Male slow worms tend to be uniform in colour with brown/golden and grey/blue colourations most common, whereas females have dark flanks and a dark stripe down their back.
- Grass snakes are the largest species of snake found in the UK They are grey/green in colour with a distinctive yellow and black collar, black bars down the side and sometimes two rows of black marks down the back.
- Common lizards are brownish grey and have dark markings down their back and sides, they can move very quickly.
- Adders have a variable coloration and can be confused with grass snake. Males are typically grey with a black zigzag stripe, females generally brown with a dark brown zigzag stripe. Black adders are found in some areas.

Where might you find them?

- Reptiles are cold blooded so can sometimes be found basking in sunny and exposed locations. More commonly you will encounter them sheltering under logs, rubble, piles of stone or ballast, or in rough grassland and areas of scrub.
- Adders have more specific habitat requirements than other common reptile species favouring heathland, moorland, meadows and open woodland.

Legislation

All native species of reptile are protected under UK law.

It is an offence to:

- Intentionally kill or injure an individual of these species;
- Transport for sale or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange a live or dead individual or any part of an individual of these species.

APPENDIX D: 10FE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AREAS

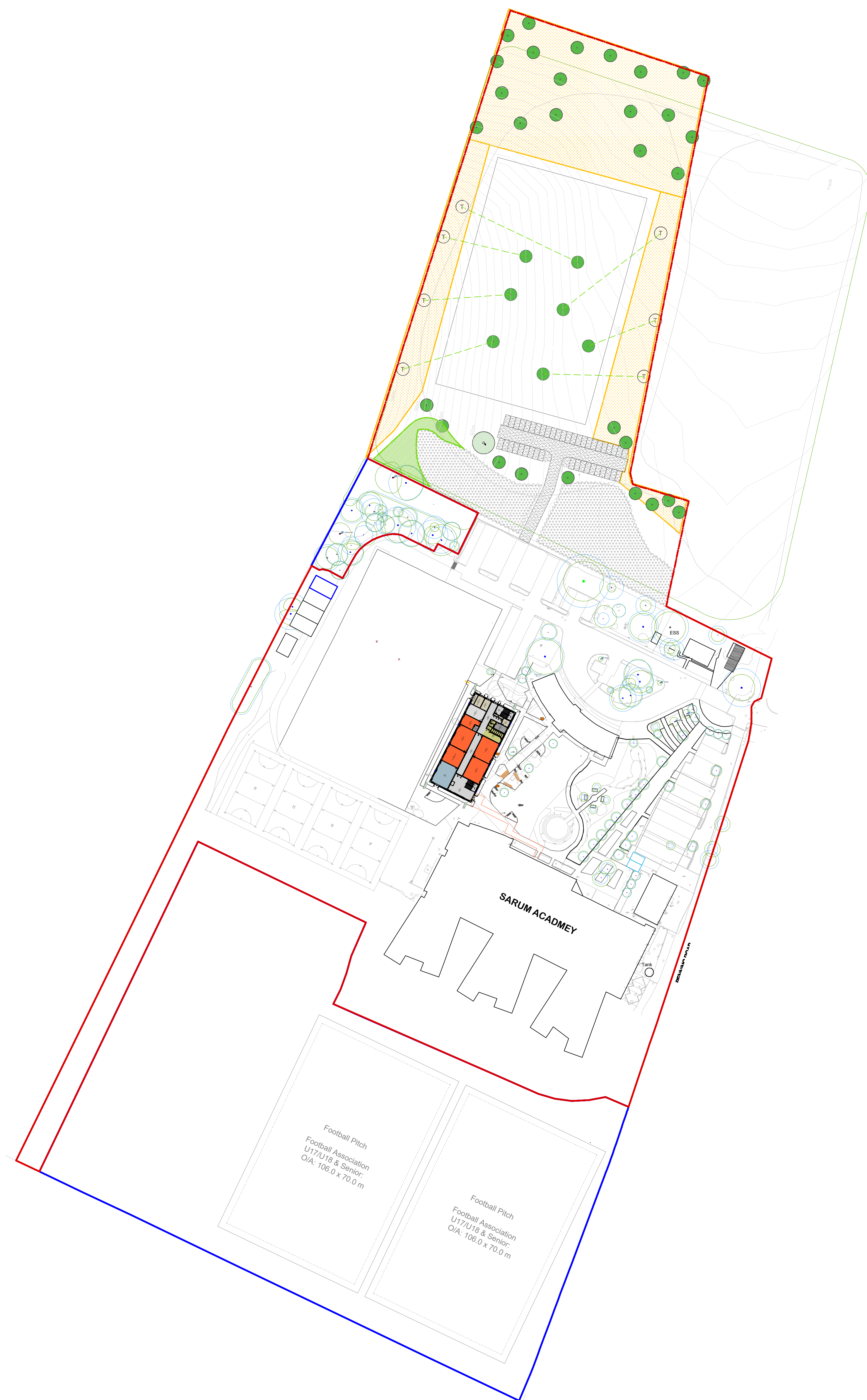
Existing Features

- Application boundary
- Land Boundary
- Existing Trees Retained
Refer to arb reporting
- Retained scrub

Proposed BNG Features

To be read in conjunction with BNG reporting

- Translocated trees 7no.**
Small existing trees translocated to facilitate new pitch.
T - denotes new location
- Native tree - 30no.**
Feathered trees
Exact number to be determined once 10FE block fixed.
- BNG Enhancement**
Areas of grassland enhancements 9400m²
- BNG Enhancement**
Areas of native scrub enhancements 3900m²



Environmental Planning	EIA	Landscape Architecture	Ecology
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GENERAL NOTES:

1.

ALL DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS SHALL BE CHECKED ON SITE PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION WORK COMMENCING.

2.

ALL LANDSCAPE DRAWINGS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT ENGINEER'S AND ARCHITECT'S DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS.

3.

ALL DRAWINGS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE LANDSCAPE SPECIFICATION.

4.

ANY DISCREPANCY CONCERNING THE DRAWINGS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE CA IMMEDIATELY.

5.

ALL DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.

6.

ALL LEVELS IN METRES.

7.

DO NOT SCALE OFF THIS DRAWING.

8.

EXISTING SERVICE ALIGNMENTS SHALL BE CHECKED ON SITE BY THE CONTRACTOR PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION WORK COMMENCING.

DRAWING NOTES:

TO BE REVIEWED ON FINAL FIXED 10FE BUILDING AND PITCH LOCATION.

0

10

20

50

100m

SCALE 1:1,000

N

Rev:

Date:

Description:

Drawn:

Ch'd:

P02

14.01.26

Updated in line with layout changes

BW

JS

P03

05.02.26

Scale bar added

BW

JS

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